THE SOCIAL PLANNING and RESEARCH COUNCIL of Hamilton and District

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"OPERATION EMPLOYABILITY"

YEAR TWO: THE YEAR OF TRANSITION

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OF HAMILTON AND DISTRICT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On July 1, 1986, "Operation Employability" received its funding and began to prepare for its first year as a pilot project. "Operation Employability" is a work experience program, run through all three local Boards of Education (Hamilton, Roman Catholic Separate School Board and Wentworth County Board). The first year of the program involved ten stutdents and in year two twenty-four students have completed the program. It is hoped that year three will involve ten additional students.

The Social Planning and Research Council (S.P.R.C.) has been chosen as the independent evaluators of the program. The S.P.R.C. has previously reported its findings in a year one interim report (March 1987), a year one report (June 1987), and a year two interim report (March 1988). This report represents an analysis of the second year of the program. Data for this report was obtained through telephone interviews conducted with those involved in the program (parents and employers), as well as other written information maintained on the program. Three main areas are the focus of this year's analys: "outcomes", "process", and "portability". Each of these areas will be briefly examined.

With respect to outcomes, it is evident that employers and parents have noticed changes in the students over the course of their placements. These changes have included some of the job readiness skills the program is attempting to impart to students. Student supervisors cited improvement in students with respect to: responsibility, following instruction, cooperation, social skills, and self confidence. Employer supervisors' responses also support comments made by the student supervisors. Further, the completion of employer evaluations of students' progress not only support the above comments, but also points to areas of improvement for students. Parents have also noticed improvements in some of their sons'/daughters' skills. These improved skills included: dependability, following instruction, social skills and self confidence.

A major change to the program in year two has been the hiring of three Job Coaches. These additional human resources were to streamline monitoring procedures, student evaluations and communication to parents. Employers have for the most part been quite satisfied with their experiences with the Job Coaches. However, parents have in some cases not been satisfied with the amount of communication they have received from the program.

As stated in the introduction, "portability" will not be addressed in great detail this year. However, it should be noted that the program is making advances in this area. In particular, there has been a conscious effort on the part of the program to promote community awareness. As well, the Project Coordinator is currently compiling a Resource Manual. To facilitate the "portability" of the program, the evaluator has suggested that an analysis of employer contacts and participation as well as a yearly review of the Project Coordinator's role be included in the Resource Manual.

Although the program has successfully completed its contracted duties for year two, there are some areas that command attention. The following recommendations by the S.P.R.C. are offered for consideration.

1. EVERY AVENUE BE EXPLORED IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT JOB COACH POSITIONS ARE FUNDED IN THE END OF YEAR THREE.
2. MORE WORK BE DONE IN YEAR THREE TO OBTAIN A FORMAL COMMITMENT TO THE ADOPTION OF "OPERATION EMPLOYABILITY" FROM EACH AREA BOARD OF EDUCATION.
3. a) WORK BE DONE WITH STUDENTS WHO WILL BE COMPLETING YEAR THREE TO PREPARE THEM FOR THEIR TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO WORK.
   b) LIAISON WORK BE DONE WITH AGENCIES/SERVICES THAT MAY BE ABLE TO ASSIST STUDENTS WHO HAVE COMPLETED THE PROGRAM AND PREPARE THEM TO MAKE THEIR TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO WORK.
4. MECHANISMS BE PUT IN MOTION TO TRACK STUDENTS' PROGRESS AS THEY LEAVE THE PROGRAM.

5. PROFESSIONAL BASELINE MEASURES OF STUDENTS' EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS BE ESTABLISHED BEFORE STUDENTS ARE PLACED AND AS YEAR THREE STUDENTS LEAVE THE PROGRAM.
6. PROFESSIONAL ASSESSMENTS OF STUDENTS' PHYSICAL ABILITIES BE ADDED TO THE STUDENT PROFILE.
7. LINES OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE PROGRAM AND PARENTS BE REVIEWED AND IMPROVED.
8. a) AN ANALYSIS OF EMPLOYER CONTACTS AND EMPLOYER PARTICIPATION BE UNDERTAKEN AND INCLUDED IN THE "OPERATION EMPLOYABILITY" RESOURCE MANUAL.
   b) A FORMAL REIVEW OF THE PROJECT COORDINATOR'S ROLE BE UNDERTAKEN AT THE END OF YEAR TWO AND YEAR THREE AND THIS INFORMATION BE INCLUDED IN "OPERATION EMPLOYABILITY" RESOURCE MANUAL.
9. MORE WORK BE DONE TO INCREASE LOCAL COMMUNITY AWARENESS OF "OPERATION EMPLOYABILITY", AND INFORMATION ABOUT SUCH ACTIVITIES BE PROVIDED TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES.
10. TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF EXTENDING THE TIME STUDENTS SPEND IN PLACEMENTS.

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This project could not have been completed without the cooperation of many individuals. At this point these individuals should be acknowledged.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton and District (S.P.R.C.) was selected by the Industry-Education Council (Hamilton-Wentworth) (I.E.C.) in the spring of 1986 to evaluate the effectiveness of "Operation Employability", a national demonstration project sponsored by the Federal Government's Innovations program. The S.P.R.C. has been involved in the evaluation of the program since its inception and has previously reported its findings in a year one interim report (March, 1987), a year one evaluation (June, 1987) and a second year interim report (March, 1988).

"Operation Employability" is a pilot work experience program offered through all three area Boards of Education (Hamilton, Roman Catholic Separate School, Wentworth County) to facilitate the transition of physically/mentally handicapped adolescents from school to work. The only requirements for entry into the program are that the student be at least sixteen years of age, and that the student remain in the school system for three consecutive years. This is the second year of the pilot project and a total of twenty three students have completed the program.[1]

In order to determine the success of the project it was decided by the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission (C.E.I.C.), Innovations Program, that an independent evaluation would be undertaken at the end of each of the three years and for two years after the program has ended and possibly been adopted by the Boards of Education. Three main sections were identified as key areas of analysis in these independent analyses:

1. process (i.e., What processes were used? Were they effective?)
2. outcomes (i.e., Is the student's employability enhanced?)
3. portability (i.e., Could this project be successfully adapted by other communities? If so, what elements might be essential to successful replication elsewhere?)

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[1] Hamilton Board of Education (8), Hamilton Separate Board (7), Wentworth County Board of Education (8).

The first year evaluation done by the S.P.R.C. focused on the "process" aspect of the program. Since the students had just begun their placements, it was felt that the first year evaluation should ensure that mechanisms were in place that would maximize the effectiveness of the program. Outcomes measures and portability were only briefly examined in year one.

This year two evaluation shifts the focus to "outcome" measures. However, the type of outcome measures to be examined will be program based as opposed to participant based.

From a research perspective, it is premature to evaluate the program from participant based outcome measures. At this point in the program one cannot conclude that students are "employable". This is the type of conclusion that would be the goal if outcome measures were based solely on participant measures. Rather, this year's analysis will focus on whether or not the program is meeting its goals with respect to the imparting of employability skills to students (as defined by the program) leading to enhanced employability. As a result, outcome measures, although the focus of the evaluation, cannot be used to predict students' employability.

Although "process" evaluation was discussed in great detail last year, it will not be the main focus of this year's evaluation. However, due to the changes in process that have been realized as a result of the hiring of Job Coaches this year, process will be briefly re-examined in this year's evaluation.

Next year more emphasis will be placed on the "portability" of the program. The issue of "portability" raises two questions.

1. How can the program be replicated in other communities?
2. Will the three area Boards of Education adopt "Operation Employability" at the end of year three?

These questions will be briefly discussed in this evaluation as well.

It is evident that "Operation Employability" experienced significant changes in year two. This year the number of program participants has grown, Job Coaches have been hired, and many more employers have been involved. All of these factors play a role in this year's evaluation.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 The Data

The data for this report was taken from a number of sources. One of the major sources of information was derived from telephone interviews conducted with employers and parents. The students were also interviewed, but their interviews were conducted in person by the Job Coaches. Other information used for this report includes employer face sheets and employer evaluation forms.

2.2a The Process

Upon receiving the names of employers and parents from the Wentworth County Board of Education, introductory letters were sent to all program participants. The letter indicated that the S.P.R.C. had been hired to evaluate "Operation Employability" and someone would be contacting them within the next few weeks to arrange an interview. Respondents were informed that the interview would be conducted over the telephone and would involve about thirty minutes of their time.

Due to the increased number of program participants (1987 = 10 student participants; 1988 = 24 student participants) and the late release of participants' names, personal interviews could not be conducted[2]. Although it is preferable to conduct personal interviews in this type of research, conducting telephone interviews would enable the researcher to offer each employer and parent the opportunity to participate.

Although personal interviews were not conducted with employers or parents, personal interviews were conducted with the students. These interviews with students were conducted by the Job Coaches. It was felt that since the Job Coaches had built up a rapport with the students, it would be easier for them to discuss the program with students.

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[2] Parents had not signed release forms until the end of May, and Wentworth County Board of Education policy would not allow parent and student information to be released prior to the parents' consent.

It should be stressed, however, that all information provided to the S.P.R.C. from the Wentworth County Board of Education, and any information provided by the Job Coaches remains strictly confidential. As well as the above information, all data taken from the telephone interviews will also be presented with the intention of maintaining the confidentiality of the respondent.

2.2b Purpose

As stated in the introduction, this year's report will focus mainly on program-based outcomes. The research instruments were designed to focus on this area as well as on "process analysis", "portability", job-related issues and levels of satisfaction. In order to obtain the most information in these areas, many of the questions were "semi-structured". The designing of questions in this manner allows the respondents to answer questions freely rather than confining their answers into pre-fixed categories.

2.2c Completion Rates

Of the twenty-eight employers' names given to the researcher, eighteen interviews were completed (64%). The remaining ten employers did not complete the interview due to the reasons listed in Table 1.

TABLE 1: COMPLETION RATES FOR EMPLOYER INTERIVEWS (n=28)

	Frequency	%
1. Interviews completed	18	64.2
2. Employers did not feel they knew enough to complete the interview.	2	7.1
3. Employees no longer employed there.	2	7.1
4. Employers agreed to interview, but were not available when called.	1	3.6
5. Employers called, but told researcher they would call to set up the interview.	1	3.6
6. Employer too new in position to comment.	1	3.6
7. Employer on maternity leave.	1	3.6
8. Employer could not participate in interview at work.	1	3.6
9. Employer set up interview and then could not be reached.	1	3.6
Total	28	100.0

Employers were divided into two groups: employer supervisors, and student supervisors. This distinction was made to enhance the information obtained during the interviews. Employer supervisors for the most part, are those individuals approached by the Program Coordinator to discuss the possibility for student placements. Usually once they have agreed to accept students, they are not involved in the student's placement[3]. Student supervisors, however, are those individuals who work closely with the students in their placements.

[3] Any employers who were owner managers, were interviewed using the student supervisor instrument due to their closer working relationship with the students.

Twenty-one parents names were given to the researcher as possible program participants. A total of eleven interviews were conducted with parents. Table 2 lists the results of the interviewing schedule for parents.

TABLE 2: COMPLETION RATES FOR PARENT INTERVIEWS (n=21)

	Frequency	%
1. Interviews completed.	11	52.3
2. Parent refused to participate.	6*	28.5
3. Parents unable to be contacted.	3	14.3
4. Parent set up interview three times, but did not participate.	1	4.8
Total	21	99.9

* Four parents were not interested and two parents could not communicate in the English language.

2.3 Update Since Year One Evaluation

The year one evaluation of "Operation Employability" put forward fifteen recommendations. These recommendations, based on the research findings of year one were offered in order to facilitate the transition of the program into year two. Upon receiving the report in June of 1987, the Steering Committee made every effort to explore the feasibility of each recommendation. The S.P.R.C. has previously reported on the response of the Steering Committee for Operation Employability in the interim report (March, 1988). A copy of these responses can be found in the Appendix.

However, it is important to review one recommendation that has had an impact on many other aspects of the program. In response to the recommendation that someone be hired to assist the Project Coordinator in year two, the Steering Committee explored several options.

Through the initiative of the Wentworth County Board of Education, an application was made to the C.E.I.C. (Job Development Program - Canadian Job Strategies) to hire two Job Coaches and one project/manager Job Coach. This application received approval in January of 1988 and the three Job Coaches were subsequently hired and trained. Although the role of Job Coach is explored in other sections of this report, personal interviews were conducted with the Job Coaches in order to afford each of them an opportunity to comment on certain aspects of the program.

2.4 The Job Coaches

After interviewing the Job Coaches it was apparent that all of them were made fully aware of the goals of "Operation Employability" and their responsibilities to help the program meet those goals. In fact all of the Job Coaches agree that they were given enough information and training to perform their duties.

With respect to job satisfaction, all of the Job Coaches were relatively satisfied with their job duties. Two of the Job Coaches note that it is the gratification of seeing the students succeed which makes the job satisfying. Another Job Coach states that it is rewarding to see parents allow the students to explore their own independence. When asked if there are aspects of the job that they dislike, the Job Coaches cite correcting students, report writing and bureaucracy.

The Job Coaches were also asked about their experiences with the employers and students involved in the program. The Job Coaches feel that many of the employers are open to the basic premise of the program and they did not encounter difficulty in placing students. In fact the Job Coaches note that some of the employers' attitudes have changed and their awareness increased. The students, in their opinion, are all benefiting from their participation in the program. All of the Job Coaches note that the students seem to have increased self confidence, better social skills and increased productivity as a result of their work experience.

Finally, the Job Coaches were asked if there were any changes to the program that they would like to see occur. One Job Coach feels that the program could benefit from increased community awareness. Another Job Coach states that students might benefit from longer time in placements. Lastly, another Job Coach speculates that adoption of the program by the Boards of Education would facilitate the process of the program.

3.0 EXPECTATIONS AND INVOLVEMENT

In this year's evaluation, respondents were asked to respond to some questions that do not necessarily address areas covered in the three major sections of analysis of this report. However, in light of findings last year, it was felt that some areas should be reviewed again this year.

3.1 Employers

In order to gain an idea as to employer motivation for participating in the program this year, this question was asked of both employer supervisors and student supervisors.

TABLE 3A: "WHY DID YOU WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM?"
(Employer Supervisors n=6)

	Frequency	%
1. To help these students out.	2	33.3
2. Because we are progressive in this area already (employing the disabled).	1	16.6
3. We like to support positive initiatives.	1	16.6
4. To enlighten staff.	1	16.6
5. To give the student experience.	1	16.6
Total	6	99.7

Table 3A reveals that a small majority of employer supervisors participated in the program "to help the students out".

Table 3B lists the responses of the student supervisors.

TABLE 3B: "WHY DID YOU WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM?"

(Student Supervisors n=12)

	Frequency	%
1. To help the student.	4	33.3
2. We are progressive in this area already (employing the disabled).	1	8.3
3. To give the student a retail opportunity.	1	8.3
4. We needed the extra help.	1	8.3
5. To give the student work experience.	1	8.3
6. Employee not asked to participate - no choice.	1	8.3
7. We had previous positive experience with co-op.	1	8.3
8. No response	2	16.6
Total	12	99.7

As was the case for the employer supervisors, many of the student supervisors participated in the program because they wanted "to help the student out" (33.3%).

Last year's evaluation revealed that many employer supervisors and student supervisors thought that the goal of "Operation Employability" was to secure employment for program participants. As a result, emphasis this year has been to clarify the goal of the program to be "enhanced" employability. Therefore, both the employer supervisors and student supervisors were asked to define the goal of "Operation Employability" again this year.

TABLE 4A: "WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF OPERATION EMPLOYABILITY"

(Employer Supervisor n=6)

	Frequency	%
1. To teach the student job readiness.	2	33.3
2. To see if the student can be employable.	2	33.3
3. To get the student involved in other activities.	1	16.6
4. To integrate the student into society.	1	16.6
Total	6	99.8

Table 4A reveals that the majority of the employer supervisors' responses indicate that the goals of "Operation Employability" involve some aspect of "employability". These responses are more in line with the goals of the program as defined by the Steering Committee of "Operation Employability" this year.

Table 4B list the responses of the student supervisors.

TABLE 4B: "WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF OPERATION EMPLOYABILITY"
(Student Supervisor n=12)

	Frequency	%
1. To teach job readiness.	3	25.0
2. To give students self confidence.	3	25.0
3. Integration.	2	16.6
4. To identify the needs of students.	1	8.3
5. To teach students to deal with public.	1	8.3
6. To give students the work ethic.	1	8.3
7 No response.	1	8.3
Total	12	99.8

As with the employer supervisors responses, half (50%) of the student supervisors' answers involve the idea of job readiness/self-confidence. However, there are still a wide variety of responses that encompass the remaining 50% of responses. This may signal an area for extra emphasis next year.

In order to focus on the bi-level learning aspect of the program, employers were also asked whether they had learned anything from their experience with "Operation Employability".

TABLE 5A: "DID YOU LEARN ANYTHING FROM YOUR EXPERIENCE IN THE PROGRAM?"

(Employer Supervisors n=6)

	Frequency	%
1. Increased awareness about the handicapped population.	2	33.3
2. No, nothing.	2	33.3
3. These students can work.	1	16.6
4. To keep food away from the student.	1	16.6
Total	6	99.8

One of the responses given by the employer supervisors is that they have experienced increased awareness about the handicapped population as a result of their experience with the program. Table 5B reveals the student supervisors responses to the same question.

TABLE 5B: "DID YOU LEARN ANYTHING FROM YOUR EXPERIENCE IN THE PROGRAM?"

(Student Supervisors n=12)

	Frequency	%
1. These students can work at jobs.	3	25.0
2. Understanding, patience.	2	16.6
3. No	2	16.6
4. No response.	2	16.6
5. Supervising the student was not as difficult as I thought.	2	16.6
6. Increased awareness of this population.	1	8.3
Total	12	99.7

Table 4B reveals that some of the student supervisors have been made more aware of these students' abilities through their experience with the program. It is evident from these two tables that both employer supervisors and student supervisors have learned something from their experiences with the program.

Also, in order to gather further information about gaining acceptance of the physically/mentally handicapped individual in the work place, the student supervisors were asked their opinions about this idea. A majority of student supervisors (58.3%) state that physically/mentally handicapped individuals could gain acceptance in the work place if there was an increase in community awareness about the abilities these individuals possess. Others reply that the only way to gain acceptance would be to educate staff (16.6%) or to provide constant supervision (8.3%) for the handicapped individual.

The employer supervisors, however, were split when it came to their decision to participate in the program next year. Half of the employer supervisors (50.0%) indicate that they will participate in the program again next year. Another 33.3% of employer supervisors did not know whether they would participate in the program again next year, and one employer (16.6%) replied that they will not be involved in the program next year. However, all of the employer supervisors indicate that they would recommend the program to other employers.

The student supervisors were also asked whether they would be willing to supervise another student next year. A large majority of student supervisors state they would supervise another student (83.3%), one student supervisor was undecided (8.3%), and another student supervisor felt that their decision would have to be made after they had the opportunity to meet the student.

3.2 The Parents

Although in this year's evaluation the parents were not asked many questions that can be included in this section, a question was asked about parents' perceptions of the goals of "Operation Employability". Table 6 lists parents' responses to the question regarding the goals of "Operation Employability".

TABLE 6: "WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE GOALS OF OPERATION EMPLOYABILITY?"
(Parents n=11)

	Frequency	%
1. To see if student is employable.	2	14.3
2. To see what students can do.	2	14.3
3. To teach independence.	2	14.3
4. No response.	2	14.3
5. To find students a job.	1	7.1
6. To teach social skills.	1	7.1
7. To teach students to belong to the community.	1	7.1
8. To help students grow.	1	7.1
9. To expose the public to handicapped individuals.	1	7.1
10. To get jobs for students.	1	7.1
Total	14*	99.8

* Due to multiple responses.

Many of the parents' responses do indicate an understanding of the defined program goal of "enhanced employability", while the other responses are varied. Perhaps the goals of the program need to be re-emphasized to parents, or parents are really superimposing their own hopes for program participants into their view of the program goals.

3.3 The Students

As mentioned in the section on methodology, the Job Coaches conducted a short personal interview with the students. The questions for the students were designed basically to obtain a sense of students' satisfaction with their placements. As with anyone who works for a living, the students identify certain likes and dislikes about their job tasks. However, most students are satisfied with this year's placements and have already begun to think about their choices for placements next year.

Although most of the students did not identify many areas of the program they would like to see changed in any way, there are a few suggestions offered by the students. One student stated that he/she would prefer to have more choice in the placements. Another student suggested that more actual work duties be allocated to students while on placement. This particular student notes that there was not much for he/she to do while on placement. Lastly, two other students feel that they required more supervision and direction while on placement. A suggestion made by one student was that more supervision be supplied by the Job Coach. The student made this suggestion because, in his/her opinion, he/she received better instruction and feedback from the Job Coach.

4.0 OUTCOMES/SATISFACTION

As stated in the introduction, this report will focus primarily on program-based outcome measures. To this end it is necessary to reiterate the goals of "Operation Employability". The goals of "Operation Employability" can be briefly summarized:

1. To enhance the employability of the student participants through work experience.
2. To help student participants identify areas of vocational interest by having experienced many different types of work environments.

However, what is meant by the term "employability"? Last year it was found that many parents and employers indentified the major goal of "Operation Employability" to be securing employment for program participants. As a result this year an attempt has been made to emphasize the goal of "enhanced employability", which was the original intent of the program. The program hopes that work experience will impart job readiness skills to program participants, which may eventually lead to employment. These job readiness skills have been defined by the program and efforts have been made in this year's analysis to test for these skills.

Two research questions that result from the program's goals can be stated as follows:

1. Is the student's employability enhanced?
2. How has the student's employability been enhanced?

A logical measure of enhanced employability would be that student participants would all secure employment shortly after completing the program. However, this is a long term goal and measure, which reveals little about the idea of "enhanced employability" at this stage of the program.

In order to elicit information regarding the enhanced employability of program participants, both employers and parents were asked about the job readiness skills of program participants. As well as this information, employers have all completed student evaluation forms. The information obtained through these sources should allow some comments to be made about the enhanced employability of the students.

4.1 The Employers

4.1a The Student Supervisors

There were eight job readiness skills defined by the program and student supervisors were asked to rate the students' performance on each of these skills at the end of their placement. Table 7 represents these results.

TABLE 7: "HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE PLACEMENT STUDENT ON EACH OF THESE SKILLS?" (Student Supervisors n=10)*

	Very Good	Adequate	Needs Improvement	Total
1. Punctuality	8 (80%)	2 (20%)		10 (100%)
2. Dependability	6 (60%)	3 (30%)	1 (10%)	10 (100%)
3. Responsibility	1 (10%)	7 (70%)	2 (20%)	10 (100%)
4. Following Instruction	4 (40%)	6 (60%)		10 (100%)
5. Cooperation	8 (80%)	2 (20%)		10 (100%)
6. Dress Habits	3 (30%)	7 (70%)		10 (100%)
7. Social Skills	1 (10%)	4 (40%)	5 (50%)	10 (100%)
8. Self Confidence		4 (40%)	6 (60%)	10 (100%)

* Two no responses.

The student supervisors' responses provide us with a good overall assessment of the program participants' skills. Three skills identified as being very good by the student supervisors are: punctuality, dependability, and cooperation. Two skills, however, are identified as needing improvement. These skills are social skills and self confidence. Other skills, such as responsibility, following instruction and dress habits, were all seen to be adequate by the student supervisors.

Although informative, these responses do not indicate whether student participants have made any improvements in these skills over the course of the placement. To gain a sense of whether student participants are progressing in their placements in terms of these skills, student supervisors were asked about the program participants' improvement in the same eight job readiness skills over the course of the placement. Table 8 lists these results.

TABLE 8: "HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE PLACEMENT STUDENT WITH RESPECT TO JOB READINESS SKILLS?" (Student Supervisors n=12)*

	Greatly Improved	Improved	Remained The Same	Total
1. Punctuality			10 (100%)	10 (100%)
2. Dependability	1 (10%)	3 (30%)	6 (60%)	10 (100%)
3. Responsibility	2 (20%)	6 (60%)	2 (20%)	10 (100%)
4. Following Instruction	1 (10%)	5 (50%)	4 (40%)	10 (100%)
5. Cooperation	2 (20%)	5 (50%)	3 (30%)	10 (100%)
6. Dress Habits			10 (100%)	10 (100%)
7. Social Skills	1 (10%)	7 (70%)	2 (20%)	10 (100%)
8. Self Confidence		8 (80%)	2 (20%)	10 (100%)

* Two no responses.

Table 8 reveals that there are only two skills that have, for the most part, remained the same for program participants over the course of the placement: punctuality and dress habits. This finding with respect to punctuality can partly be explained by the fact that the Job Coaches and parents assisted some of the students by transporting them to the work site. Also, some of the students wore uniforms while on their placement, which could also explain the response for dress habits.

What is interesting about the results is that we find student supervisors noting that program participants have improved with respect to these skills: responsibility, following instruction, cooperation, social skills, and self confidence. In fact, some student supervisors noted great improvement in some students' skills. This information reveals the student supervisors' perceptions of students' improvements while on their placements.

Student supervisors were also asked if they had noticed any other changes in the students during the course of their placements. Ten student supervisors responded to the question, and their comments are listed as follows.

Comments Made By Student Supervisors Regarding Other Changes in Students

"_____ pays more attention to personal appearance now."

"The student had a problem with motivation before but it has improved."

"Student was nervous at first, but then they became very self confident."

"_____ used to be really shy, but has really increased in their use of verbal expression."

"Not as shy as _____ used to be; more developed social skills."

"The student is much more happier at work now than before."

"_____ used to be quiet and shy, but has really opened up now."

"The student is more relaxed now."

"The student has opened up more and is more self confident."

"The student used to stand there and wait to be told what to do, but now _____ will start on their own."

The student supervisors were also asked whether they felt students were learning skills in their placements that would eventually help the students secure employment. A majority of student supervisors (75.0%) stated that they felt the students were learning skills that would help them find employment. When these respondents were asked to identify which specific skills might be beneficial to the students, a number of responses were given. Table 9 summarizes these responses.

TABLE 9: "WHAT SKILLS DO YOU THINK MIGHT HELP THE STUDENTS FIND EMPLOYMENT?"

(Student Supervisors n=9)

	Frequency	%
1. Basic job experience.	3	33.3
2. Working with people.	2	22.2
3. Learning a specific job skill.	2	22.2
4. Office skills.	1	11.1
5. Work attitudes and acceptable behaviour.	1	11.1
Total	9	99.9

It would seem that student supervisors value basic job experience as an important skill for program participants' future employment.

4.1b: The Employer Supervisors

Although employer supervisors are not directly involved with the students, they were still asked whether they had noticed any changes in the students during the course of the placement. All of the employer supervisors indicated that they noticed changes in the placement students. Their responses can be found in Table 10.

TABLE 10: "WHAT CHANGES HAVE YOU NOTICED IN THE STUDENTS?"
(Employer Supervisors n=6)

	Frequency	%
1. Student more talkative/outgoing.	4	50.0
2. Increased self confidence.	2	25.0
3. Increased independence.	1	12.5
4. Increased responsibility.	1	12.5
Total	8	100.0

The responses of the employer supervisors reinforce those of the student supervisors. In particular, it would seem that employer supervisors found that students' social skills and self confidence have improved.

As with the student supervisors, the employer supervisors were also asked whether students' placement experience would help them to secure employment. A majority of employer supervisors (83.3%) stated that job placement experience would assist the students in their search for employment. One employer noted, however, that in his/her opinion students were only learning fractions of jobs. As a result of this fragmentation, the employer feels it would be difficult for employers to find a combination of repetitive tasks that could be considered a "job", suitable for some of these students.

Employer supervisors who replied that placement experience would help these students to find employment, offered three main reasons for their response. Employers feel that work experience will teach students appropriate "work" behaviours, and self confidence. These two skills coupled with actual work experience would, in the employer supervisors' view, be advantageous to students.

4.1c Employer Evaluations

The researcher was given the opportunity to examine the evaluation forms that employers completed at the end of June.[4]

After examining the employers' evaluations it is evident that their responses support both the comments made by student supervisors and employer supervisors to the researcher. It is apparent that a majority of employers are satisfied with the performance of the placement students. In fact, many of the employers had positive remarks to offer about both the students' progress and development.

The employers did comment on areas in which the students need improvement. These areas are:[5] self confidence, concentration, social skills, initiative, organizational skills, motivation and personal hygiene.

The information provided by employers via the telephone interviews and the employer evaluations offer many clues as to skills/behaviors where educators, employers and Job Coaches could emphasize when working with students.

4.2 The Parents/Outcomes

The parents were also asked to rate the job readiness skills of their sons/daughters, but remarked that it was difficult to comment on progress in these areas. Parents feel that they cannot comment on students' progress because they are not involved in the placement activities of the student, and they have not received many updates from employers about the students' progress.

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[4] A blank copy can be found in the Appendix.
[5] In order of response most frequently.

Table 11 summarizes parents' responses to the question regarding job readiness skills.

TABLE 11: "HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR SON/DAUGHTER ON EACH OF THESE SKILLS?" (Parents n=8)*

	Very Good	Adequate	Needs Improvement	Total
1. Punctuality	6 (75.0%)	2 (25.0%)		8 (100%)
2. Dependabilty	3 (37.5%)	4 (50.0%)	1 (12.5%)	8 (100%)
3. Responsibility	3 (37.5%)	4 (50.0%)	1 (12.5%)	8 (100%)
4. Following Instructions	1 (12.5%)	4 (50.0%)	3 (37.5%)	8 (100%)
5. Cooperation	3 (37.5%)	3 (37.5%)	2 (25.0%)	8 (100%)
6. Dress Habits	1 (12.5%)	6 (75.0%)	1 (25.0%)	8 (100%)
7. Social Skills	3 (37.5%)	3 (37.5%)	2 (25.0%)	8 (100%)
8. Self Confidence		4 (50.0%)	4 (50.0%)	8 (100%)

* Three no responses.

The above table reveals that parents identified only two skills/behaviours that in their opinion require improvement: following instructions and self confidence. A majority of the other skills have all been viewed by the parents as adequate, with "punctuality" being very good.

Once again, however, these responses do not reveal whether parents have perceived any changes in students' skills since they have been involved in the program. As in the cases of the employers, the parents were also asked to comment on the students' improvement in these job readiness skills.

Table 12 reveals that certain skills have seen improvement in parents' opinion. These improved skills are: dependability, following instruction, social skills and self confidence. It is evident that these results support the comments given by the student supervisors.

TABLE 12: "HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR SON/DAUGHTER ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF THESE JOB READINESS SKILLS?" (Parents n=8)*

	Greatly Improved	Improved	Remained The Same	Total
1. Punctuality			8 (100.0%)	8 (100%)
2. Dependabilty		4 (50.0%)	4 (50.0%)	8 (100%)
3. Responsibility		3 (37.5%)	5 (62.5%)	8 (100%)
4. Following Instructions		6 (75.0%)	2 (25.0%)	8 (100%)
5. Cooperation		4 (50.0%)	4 (50.0%)	8 (100%)
6. Dress Habits		2 (25.0%)	6 (75.0%)	8 (100%)
7. Social Skills		5 (62.5%)	3 (37.5%)	8 (100%)
8. Self Confidence	1 (12.5%)	6 (75.0%)	1 (12.5%)	8 (100%)

* Three no responses.

The parents were also asked whether they had noticed any other changes (other than the job readiness skills) in their sons/daughters. A small majority (55.0%) of the parents state they had noticed other changes. These changes include: the student is happier, the student is taking pride in his/her work, the student is more independent and that the student is more outgoing.

4.3 Students

As noted in section three, all of the students mentioned likes and dislikes they have about their various placements. In this section, however, the interest is directed more towards how the students feel about working. Table 14 summarizes the students' responses to this question.

TABLE 13: "HOW DOES WORKING MAKE YOU FEEL?"

(Students n=21)

	Frequency	%
1. I feel good about myself.	11	44.0
2. Happy.	5	20.0
3. Mature.	3	12.0
4. Employable.	3	12.0
5. Independent.	2	8.0
6. Important.	1	4.0
Total	25*	100.0

* Due to multiple responses.

These response reveal that many of the students have had a positive experience from the program and are satisfied with their placements.

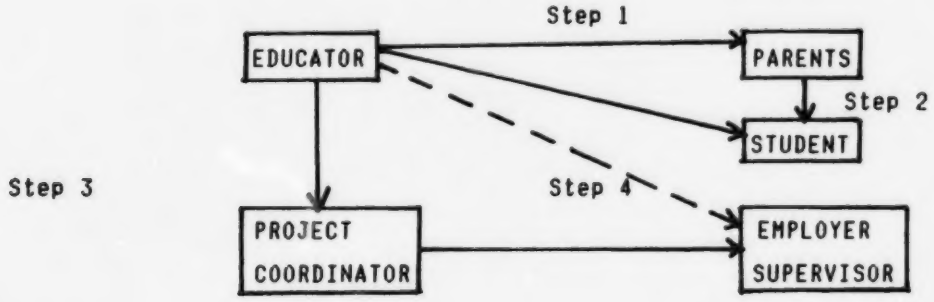
5.0 PROCESS

5.1 The Placement Process

The placement process utilized during the course of the first year of the program was planned so that both students' needs and employers' needs were identified and met. Figure 1 illustrates the placement process that was used in the program's first year.

FIGURE 1

SELECTION AND PLACEMENT OF STUDENTS IN OPERATION EMPLOYABILITY (YEAR 1)



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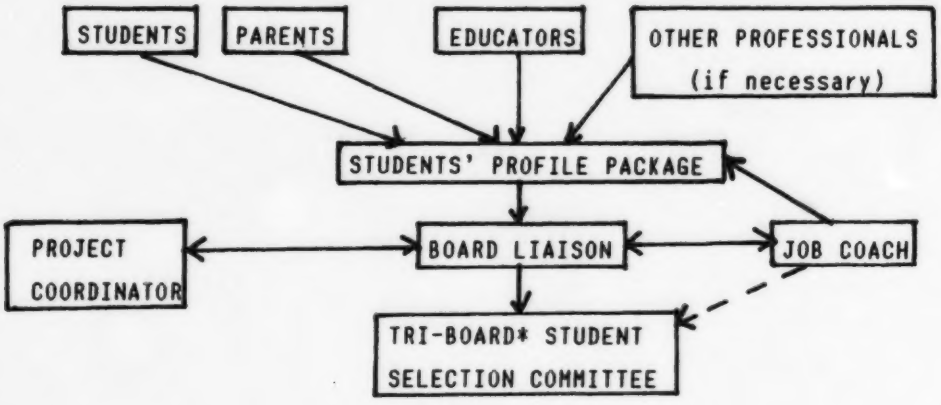
(activity lines denote discussion and consultation)

In the report on the first year of the program, an attempt was made to examine that process and test for participant satisfaction with the program. Although this year the emphasis of this report is not on "process" evaluation, changes have been made to the process and as a result this component must be briefly re-examined.

The addition of Job Coaches to the program has altered the process outlined in Figure 1. As well as the new role of Job Coach added to the process, the role of Board Liaison has also become an integral part of this year's process. This process is described in Figure 2.

FIGURE 2

THE SELECTION AND PLACEMENT OF STUDENTS IN OPERATION EMPLOYABILITY (YEAR 2)



* consists of 3 Board Liaison persons and the Project Coordinator

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(activity lines denote discussion and consultation)

As one can see from this model, a system has been established whereby all three Board Liaisons and Job Coaches consult with each other about the selection of students for participation in the program. Previously, the selection of students rested solely with the educators. However, the formation of a Tri-Board Selection Committee ensures that all students entering the program are sufficiently prepared for the program. As was the case last year, a meeting was to be arranged with the employer prior to the commencement of a placement. The placement process was briefly examined in this year's report.

5.1a Employers

The student supervisors were first asked about the placement process. A majority of the student supervisors (75.0%)[6] and all of the employer supervisors (100.0%) state that, once contacted by someone from the program (either the Project Coordinator or the Job Coach) a meeting was arranged for all involved in the program. Individuals usually attending these meetings include: the employer supervisor, the student supervisor, the student, the student's parent(s)/guardian, the educator, and either the Project Coordinator/Job Coach.

All of the employer supervisors and the student supervisors note that they were satisfied with the placement process. Some of the respondents offered reasons for their satisfaction with the process. These reasons are[7]: having an opportunity to meet the student, it is a good process, the Job Coach is informative, and there is good contact between the employer and the program. None of the employer supervisors or student supervisors indicate that there are any major changes they would like to see made to the placement process.

Two employers, however, did express concern about the information they were given about the students' abilities. These employers seemed to believe that they were not given an accurate assessment of students' limitations (either through the student profile form or discussions with the job coach). As a result, employers had job duties assigned to students who in turn could not complete those duties. For the most part students were assigned to work with some hand tools or small machinery, but did not have enough physical strength to use the equipment. Coincidentally, both of these students were physically disabled.

An attempt was also made when possible to draw out a comparison between the process used in year one and that used in year two. However, this was not always possible as staff had changed in some instances, and in most cases

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[6] One student supervisor was on maternity leave and did not become involved in the program until later, and two student supervisors could not recall the meeting.

[7] In order of number of responses.

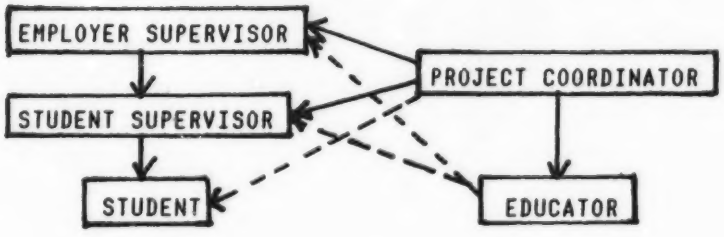
those involved merely saw the job coach as an extension of the Project Coordinator in this process. At this point in the process, employer/student supervisors viewed the job coach's role in the placement process as very similar to the Project Coordinator's role without many noticeable changes.

5.2 Monitoring and Supervision

Last year's evaluation found that the monitoring of students was inconsistent and many of the employers experienced a sense of abandonment. It was noted in last year's evaluation that the Project Coordinator alone could not keep up to the unanticipated work load that was created with the ten students involved in the program. Figure 3 below illustrates the monitoring process used in year one of the program.

FIGURE 3

PROCESS FOR MONITORING STUDENTS ON PLACEMENT
IN OPERATION EMPLOYABILITY (YEAR 1)



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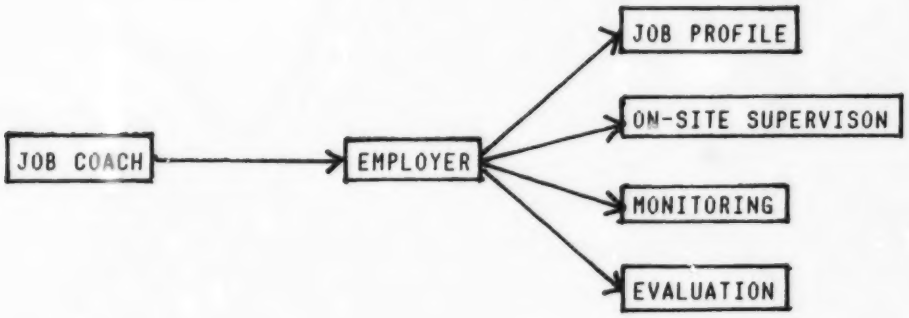
(activity lines denote discussion and consultation)

It was anticipated that the addition of Job Coaches to the program would streamline the monitoring procedures. As well, it was planned that the Job Coaches would work closely with students, coaching them while they were learning duties, provide necessary supervision in the work setting, monitor

students' progress, and ensure that employers provided an evaluation of students' performance of their work duties. Figure 4 illustrates the placement and monitoring procedures used in year two of the program.

FIGURE 4

PLACEMENT AND MONITORING OF STUDENTS IN OPERATION EMPLOYABILITY (YEAR 2)



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(activities include discussion and completion of necessary forms)

Both the student supervisors[8] and the employer supervisors were asked about monitoring procedures. A majority (90%) of student supervisors indicated that someone from the program had been by to monitor the student, and another 80% stated that they were involved in the monitoring process. All of the student supervisors noted that the Job Coach had been the one to monitor the student.

When these respondents were asked about the frequency of the monitoring, it was found that the monitoring done by the Job Coaches had been quite intensive. Half of the student supervisors (50.0%) responded that the Job Coach had monitored the work site once every week; another 40% indicate that the job coach has monitored the work site every time the student was at the

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[8] There were two no responses for the student supervisors.

placement; and one student supervisor noted that the Job Coach had only monitored the student a total of three times the whole time the student was in his/her placement. Further, a majority of these respondents (90%) commented that the Job Coach often would visit the work site in person in order to monitor the student, while one respondent stated that the Job Coach would merely call the work site.

When both employer and student supervisors were asked about changes they would like to see to the program, a majority of respondents (77%) stated that students would derive more benefit from their work experience if they spent more time in the placement. Many employers felt that the students were not gaining a "full picture" of the working environment, and this fragmentation might hamper students' future employability. Table 15 summarizes the other responses offered by employer and student supervisors regarding preferred changes to the program.

TABLE 14: "WHAT CHANGES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE OCCUR IN THE PROGRAM?" (n=13)

	Frequency	%
1. Have students stay in placements longer.	10	58.8
2. Teach students specific job skills.	1	6.0
3. Have more accurate information about students' abilities.	1	6.0
4. Give employers a better idea of what is expected on their part.	1	6.0
5. Require the Job Coach keep in touch more often.	1	6.0
6. Have students establish a better relationship with the Job Coach.	1	6.0
7. Provide employers with more definite goals.	1	6.0
8. Allow for more time to prepare both employers and students before placements begin.	1	6.0
Total	17*	100.8

* Due to multiple responses.

The frequency of the monitoring from the employer supervisors' perspective seems to be similar to that of the student supervisor. Half of the employer supervisors state that monitoring took place every week; another 33.3% stated that monitoring was done once every two weeks; while 16.6% of employer supervisors merely commented that monitoring was done on a "regular" basis. The monitoring was usually done in person, with one employer supervisor stating that occasionally the Job Coach would telephone instead of making a personal visit.

5.3 The Parents

Parents were also asked about the placement process this year, although the placement process with respect to parents' involvement has not changed significantly. The only changes one would hope to see as a result of the hiring of the Job Coaches would be that more communication and updating would occur between parents and the program.

First of all, parents participating in the telephone interview were asked about the placement process and their satisfaction with the process. A majority of respondents (73.0%) were satisfied with the placement process. Those who responded positively for the most part did not offer many reasons for their satisfaction. One parent did, however, state that the Job Coach was very informative, and they were pleased with that aspect. The other three parents who were not satisfied offered some reasons for their dissatisfaction. One parent described the whole process as "very disappointing and basically frustrating", and another parent was just "very disappointed with the whole thing". These parents found the process was too bureaucratic and very disorganized. One parent was not satisfied with the placement process because there was no feedback from the employer.

Due to the recommendations made in the year one evaluation, more emphasis this year has been given to intensifying communication between the "Operation Employability" and the parents. As a result, the Job Coaches' duties now encompass many avenues for facilitating communication. For example, one of the recommendations in year one was to have someone from the program conduct a home visit with parents. The Job Coaches now are supposed to conduct home visits with parents, and it is at this time that many items can be clarified for parents.

In fact the Job Coaches have certain goals in mind at these meetings. These goals include: providing parents with work experience forms, explaining the goals of the program, informing parents of their responsibilities to the program, ensuring parents have all necessary phone numbers, and establishing a weekly contact time with parents. Although the goal was to have Job Coaches visit students' homes at least once, subsequent home visits would be an option depending upon the need for such communication. Table 16 examines some of these duties.

TABLE 15: "HAVE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS OCCURRED SINCE YOUR SON/DAUGHTER WAS INVOLVED IN THE PROGRAM?" (n=11)

	Yes	No	Don't Know	No Response	Total
1. Did someone visit you in your home?	8 (73.0%)	3 (27.2%)			11 (100%)
2. Did you ever receive a copy of the work experience form?	4 (36.3%)	3 (27.2%)	1 (9.0%)	3 (27.2%)	11 (100%)
3. Did someone explain goals of "Operation Employability" to you?	5 (45.4%)	3 (27.2%)		3 (27.2%)	11 (100%)
4. Were you made aware of your responsibilities to the program?	6 (54.5%)	2 (18.2%)		3 (27.2%)	11 (100%)
5. Did you receive all necessary phone numbers?	6 (54.4%)	3 (27.2%)		2 (18.2%)	11 (100%)
6. Was there a weekly contact time established between you and the program?	2 (18.2%)	8 (73.0%)		1 (9.0%)	11 (100%)

When parents were asked about preferred changes to the placement process only, they did not offer many suggestions. Only one parent suggested that sutdents should not be allowed to be placed until parents have had an opportunity to meet with the employer. In this case the parent could not attend the pre-arranged meeting with the employer, and the placement still proceeded. The parent felt the situation was not handled properly.

For the most part parents were satisfied with the placements offered this year. A strong majority of parents (91.0%) felt that the job experience the students are receiving will eventually help the students to secure employment. One parent, however, did express concern as to whether the job skills the student are learning would be marketable in the labour market.

As well as obtaining a general sense as to whether parents are satisfied with the placements, parents were also asked to comment on four specific items. Table 17 summarizes these results.

TABLE 16: "HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE FOLLOWING ITEMS?"

(Parents n=9)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dis-satisfied	Very Dis-satisfied	Total
1. The variety of placements.	1 (11.1%)	6 (66.6%)		2 (22.2%)	9 (100%)
2. The amount of communication/ updates from the program.	2 (22.2%)	4 (44.4%)		3 (33.3%)	9 (100%)
3. The work being done by the program to promote community awareness of Operation Employability.	1 (11.1%)	3 (33.3%)			9*(100%)
4. The information contained in the "Operation Employability" newsletter.	1 (11.1%)	1 (11.1%)			9**(100%)

* Four "don't know" responses.

** Seven respondents did not receive a newsletter.

Table 17 reveals that many of the parents who responded were satisfied with the variety of placements offered by the program. Further, a smaller majority of parents are satisfied with the amount of communication and updates they have received from the program. Attention should be paid, however, to the number of respondents that were very dissatisfied with this aspect of the program.

One area of concern that results from this data is the high number of respondents who were not aware of activities to promote community awareness of "Operation Employability". Most parents are concerned that not enough work is being done to promote the program in the community. As a result, some parents are concerned that the program will eventually fade from the school system.

Part of the above problem may be a result of the fact that almost 80.0% of parents answering this question did not receive a copy of the "Operation Employability" newsletter. This quarterly newsletter was supposed to inform parents about program updates as well as keeping parents updated about how the community at large is being made aware about the program. In other words the newsletter provides vital information to parents. Investigation as to why parents have not received copies of the newsletter should receive some attention.

Finally, parents were asked about changes they would like to see to the program in general. These responses can be found in Table 18.

TABLE 17: "WHAT CHANGES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN THE PROGRAM?" (n=10)

	Frequency	%
1. Have more than one placement.	2	16.6
2. Have more feedback from employer and program.	2	16.6
3. Teach students more life skills.	1	8.3
4. Start program right at the beginning of the semester.	1	8.3
5. Enhance school curriculum to supplement placement experience.	1	8.3
6. Get program more organized because there is too much red tape.	1	8.3
7. Have more discussion about what happens after year 3.	1	8.3
8. Have more intense supervision.	1	8.3
9. Secure a greater variety of placements.	1	8.3
10. Have students trained by employer and not Job Coach.	1	8.3
Total	12*	99.6

* Due to a multiple response.

It is clear that parents do have some minor criticisms of the program. Some mechanisms should be put into motion to address these concerns and explore their validity.

6.0 PORTABILITY

The issue of portability in year two is two fold: how is the community being made aware of the program, and how can the program be replicated in other communities. Each of these items will be briefly addressed.

6.1 Community Awareness

The Project Coordinator has made presentations at various conferences and seminars since the year one evaluation (June, 1987). A list of these presentations can be found in Appendix B. It is evident that the Project Coordinator has made efforts to spread awareness about "Operation Employability" to various professional and service providing groups.

At the local community level some presentations were made and a mobile display was purchased. This unit will eventually display photographs of students enrolled in the program and provide some information on the program. The display unit was used at a Recognition Night held in June for students and employers, when the accomplishments of both groups were recognized. Media coverage for the Recognition Night included articles in local, daily and weekly newspapers, radio coverage and a monthly magazine.

Although there has been some work done in the local community to promote awareness, the same problem was encountered as last year. Parents do not appear to have been informed about what is being done and understandably are concerned about what they perceive as lack of activity in this area.

When the Project Coordinator and Board Liaisons were questioned about how this type of information is relayed to parents, the researcher was told it was a joint responsibility between the Project Coordinator, educators, and Job Coaches. It is evident that this line of communication needs to be re-examined and improved next year. Although it is important for a wide audience to be made aware of "Operation Employability" and its progress, it is equally important that those involved in the program and the local community be informed about such activities.

As well as the above concern, another interesting issue was raised by one Job Coach. This issue involves the fact that Job Coaches are now working more closely with students, educators, and employers than the Project Coordinator. The Job Coach feels that since they now have an on-line insight into the program, that they may be able to offer more important updated and accurate information at certain presentations and conferences. Perhaps there may be times when it would be desirable to present the perceptions of Job Coaches at some presentations or conferences.

6.2 Replication of the Program

Those interested in adopting "Operation Employability" in their community will not only be interested in hearing about the "successes" of the program, but will also need some other vital information before they proceed.

The evaluations by the Social Planning and Research Council undertaken at the end of each year of the program will help communities to understand development of the program as well as to pinpoint areas of potential concern. However, this information alone cannot fully document or describe areas of internal growth for the program. Fortunately, the Project Coordinator will produce a Resource Manual at the end of year three which will document all information necessary for other communities interested in this pilot project.

Underlying the information provided in the resource manual, however, should be some other data. It may be useful for other communities to examine information on employer contacts and employer participants. Also, this report has referred to the fact that the Project Coordinator's duties have changed from year one to year two and one can assume that they will also change in year three. This information, as well the documentation surrounding the mechanics of the project will be useful to other communities. Perhaps these two items could be incorporated into the resource manual in order to make it very comprehensive. The significance of reporting these two additional items of information will be explored.

6.2a Employer Contacts

In the interim report (March 1988), the evaluator attempted to track employer contacts and employer participation[9]. This tracking revealed that a majority of employers have remained committed by continuing to participate in the program. This employer commitment has provided a pool of employers from which to place students.

Such tracking should be done at the end of year three in order to provide a full analysis of employer participation. Other communities would be interested to know how much employer participation annd commitment they might expect. As well as this information, however, a breakdown of employer participants by sector would also be informative. It would be important for communities to be aware of what types of business or industries have been interested in participating in "Operation Employability".

6.2b The Role of the Project Coordinator

The Project Coordinator's role was defined by the Steering Committee of Operation Employability in year one. A copy of this description can be found in Appendix D. It is evident that this description was intended to be flexible allowing the priority of some duties to take precedence over others when necessary.

It may have been useful in a pilot project such as this to re-examine the Project Coordinator's role at the end of each year in order to record any shift in the priority of these duties or any changes in responsibilities.

At the end of year 2, the Project Coordinator was asked by the evaluator to review the formal job description and indicate if any changes have occurred. Once this review was completed, it was evident that the original role description had altered. Perhaps this job description should be redefined for year two, and at the end of year three. As well as redefining the role of the Project Coordinator, the Project Coordinator should indicate how duties were prioritized in each year and the reason for such allocations.

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[9] This summary can be found in Appendix C.

This type of information could be useful for other communities wishing to replicate the program. An analysis of the Project Coordinator's role could provide other interested program organizers with valuable insight how to allocate their human and financial resources. Also, this information would afford other communities a better opportunity to plan ahead for the program and facilitate its development from year to year.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are suggested to ensure the continuation of the program into year three.

1. EVERY AVENUE BE EXPLORED IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT JOB COACH POSITIONS ARE FUNDED IN THE END OF YEAR THREE.

It is evident that in year two, the Job Coaches have taken responsibility for many job duties previously undertaken by the Project Coordinator. In fact the addition of the Job Coach role has greatly enhanced the supervision and monitoring component of the program. The Project Coordinator alone could not taken on those responsibilities in year three, if the Job Coach positions are not continued. If the Job Coach role is not fully funded to the end of year three, "Operation Employability" could be in jeopardy.

2. MORE WORK BE DONE IN YEAR THREE TO OBTAIN A FORMAL COMMITMENT TO THE ADOPTION OF "OPERATION EMPLOYABILITY" FROM EACH AREA BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Year three is the last year of the pilot project "Operation Employability", and it is imperative that priority be given to this recommendation. The successful transfer of the program to the Boards of Education is dependent upon efforts made while the pilot program is still in existence. If the program is not adopted by the end of year three, the probability that "Operation Employability" will be transferred to the Boards of Education will be lessened.

3. a) WORK BE DONE WITH STUDENTS WHO WILL BE COMPLETING YEAR THREE TO PREPARE THEM FOR THEIR TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO WORK.

   b) LIAISON WORK BE DONE WITH AGENCIES/SERVICES THAT MAY BE ABLE TO ASSIST STUDENTS WHO HAVE COMPLETED THE PROGRAM AND PREPARE THEM TO MAKE THEIR TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO WORK.

This recommendation clearly involves two aspects. First of all, some students will be completing the program this year, and they must subsequently be referred to other agencies or services. If referral mechanisms are not put into place, the students' employability skills will not be enhanced, and they will find it difficult to secure employment without assistance.

Second, agencies must be prepared to receive these students into their programs or add them to their client list. It is important that these students make a smooth transition from school into work or other programs. If agencies are not prepared to work with these students or if students are put on a waiting list, this time lapse may be detrimental to their development.

4. MECHANISMS BE PUT IN MOTION TO TRACK STUDENTS' PROGRESS AS THEY LEAVE THE PROGRAM.

At the end of year three, several students will complete the program and leave the school system. It is imperative that the program be able to track the progress of these students. The program's long term success can only be measured by following up on the students and their activities. Without this information other school systems or communities will be unable to make an accurate decision about replicating the program.

As well as year three students who will complete the program, there will be other students who have participated in the program and moved into cooperative education or other programs. It would also be useful to keep detailed information on these students' progress. Information on all program participants will be useful to the program for its own information and for other interested parties considering adoption of the program.

5. PROFESSIONAL BASELINE MEASURES OF STUDENTS' EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS BE ESTABLISHED BEFORE STUDENTS ARE PLACED AND AS YEAR THREE STUDENTS LEAVE THE PROGRAM.

As stated earlier in the report it is difficult to state that students' employability has been enhanced. One of the basic reasons this type of analysis has been difficult to undertake stems from the fact that there are no baseline measures of students' employability. It would be useful not only for evaluation purposes to have this type of information on students as they begin and end the program, but also to agencies who must work with these students once they complete the program.

6. PROFESSIONAL ASSESSMENTS OF STUDENTS' PHYSICAL ABILITIES BE ADDED TO THE STUDENT PROFILE.

It was found that some of the employers were not satisfied with the information on student profile forms regarding the physical abilities of students. At one point the program had discussed securing the assistance of occupational therapists with student assessments. Perhaps this avenue should be explored in more detail in year three.

7. LINES OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE PROGRAM AND PARENTS BE REVIEWED AND IMPROVED.

Although the addition of Job Coaches to the program this year was supposed to enhance lines of communication between the program and parents, this has not always been the case. Some parents have found the transitional period, involving the shift of duties from the Project Coordinator to the Job Coaches, difficult. Parents have in some instances been concerned about the lack of feedback they have received about their son's/daughters' placement experiences, as well as their lack of awareness of the day to day activities of the program.

8. a) AN ANALYSIS OF EMPLOYER CONTACTS AND EMPLOYER PARTICIPATION BE UNDERTAKEN AND INCLUDED IN THE "OPERATION EMPLOYABILITY" RESOURCE MANUAL.

b) A FORMAL REIVEW OF THE PROJECT COORDINATOR'S ROLE BE UNDERTAKEN AT THE END OF YEAR TWO AND YEAR THREE AND THIS INFORMATION BE INCLUDED IN "OPERATION EMPLOYABILITY" RESOURCE MANUAL.

The importance of obtaining this information has already been discussed in the portability section (see Section Six). Briefly, this data will provide useful information to other communities as well as be instructive for the program in year three.

9. MORE WORK BE DONE TO INCREASE LOCAL COMMUNITY AWARENESS OF "OPERATION EMPLOYABILITY", AND INFORMATION ABOUT SUCH ACTIVITIES BE PROVIDED TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES.

In year three it is particularly important that the Project Coordinator ensures that "Operation Employability" receives a high community profile. The Boards of Education may be more likely to adopt the program if it is the recipient of a great deal of community support. Further, if more individuals in the area are aware about the program, there may be a number of groups who would be interested in pursuing the adoption of "Operation Employability" with the local Boards of Education.

10. TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF EXTENDING THE TIME STUDENTS SPEND IN PLACEMENTS.

Many of the employers seemed to feel that students would derive more benefit from the program if they could spend more time at the placement. It would seem logical that the more experience the students receive the better the opportunity for them to learn. However, this recommendation will have to be discussed with Board officials in order to determine if this may conflict with school curriculum.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

The second year of "Operation Employability" has seen a great deal of activity. It has been an extremely productive year as the number of student participants has increased, the number of employer participants has increased, and Job Coaches have been hired. As a result of the increased demand on the resources of the project, there have been times when process and lines of communication have been strained or awkward. However, all program participants have been satisfied with the program this year.

Although there has been a considerable amount of satisfaction on the part of program participants, this satisfaction has been due partly to the addition of the Job Coaches. Without the additional human resources of the Job Coaches, the program will not be able to successfully complete year three.

It is imperative that "Operation Employability" receive funding for Job Coaches for year three of the program. This last year will be crucial for "Operation Employability" and it must be given the opportunity to complete the ground work the program initiated three years ago. The recommendations put forward in this report are designed to assist the program with its transition into year three, and possibly to assist in its successful transfer to the three Boards of Education.

APPENDIX A

SUPERVISOR EVALUATION SHEET

SUPERVISOR EVALUATION SHEET

STUDENT: _____

SUPERVISOR: _____

PLACEMENT: _____

DATE: _____

1. Briefly comment on the following areas:

   a) Punctuality and attendance

   b) Work consistency

   c) Communication with others

   d) Self confidence and self image

2. Describe the student's ability to accept supervision and instructions.

3. What would you identify as the student's strengths?

4. Comment on areas that need improvement?

5. Comment on the student's overall adjustment in the placement.

Thank you for completing this evaluation form. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

APPENDIX B

LIST OF PRESENTATIONS MADE TO CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS IN YEAR TWO

PRESENTATIONS MADE TO CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS IN YEAR TWO

July 1987	Ontario March of Dimes featured Operation Employability Project Coordinator interview for vocational training video for teaching handicapped people seeking to enter the work place.
October 1987	Annual National Association for Industry-Education Cooperation Showcase Conference, IEC/Operation Employability presentation, IEC Executive Director & Project Coordinator.
October 1987	Downs Syndrome Association of Hamilton & District Saturday Seminar - Project Coordinator, Keynote Speaker.
November 1987	Board of Education for the City of Hamilton Special Education Advisory Committee (Project Coordinator, Project up date).
January 1988	Brock University Cooperative Education Certification Course, Project Coordinator, Project Presentation.
February 1988	Humber Colleges' National Symposium for Senior Secretaries & Administrative Assistants, Project Coordinator, Networking Case History.
February 1988	"Women on the Move" Networking Group for Hamilton & area Professional Women (Project Coordinator, Networking Case History)
March 1988	Hamilton-Wentworth Skills Training Advisory Committee Monthly Meeting (IEC Board Director & Project Coordinator) IEC/ Operation Employability Presentation.
March 1988	Hamilton-Wentworth Salary Survey Group Quarterly Business Meeting, IEC Executive Director & Two Project Coordinators - IEC and Its New Initiatives Projects.
March 1988	Hamilton Rotary A.M. Club Weekly Breakfast Meeting (IEC Executive Director & Project Coordinator) IEC/Operation Employability Presentation.
April 1988	Ontario Industry/Education Symposium Ontario Cooperative Education Association & IEC (Project Coordinator) Workshop Convenor Innovation & Jobs in the 1990's.
April 1988	Cornwall Community Living Association fact finding visit to launch Project (IEC Executive Director & Project Coordinator)
May 1988	Guelph IEC Exploratory Group (Boards of Education, University of Guelph, Connestoga College, Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club etc.), IEC Executive Director & Two Project Coordinators, Mohawk College & Chamber of Commerce Reps.

May 1988	Ontario Cooperative Education Association Annual Conference: Kitchener-Waterloo Operation Employability Workshop (IEC Project Coordinator).
June 1988	National Access Awareness Week Employment Workshop: Royal Connaught Hotel (PATH Executive Director & IEC Project Coordinator)
June 1988	2nd Annual Student/Employer Recognition Night (250 guests) Launch Information Display (Project Coordinator, Board Liaisons, Job Coaches and Steering Committee).
June 1988	Cooperative Career Work Education Association of Canada Annual Conference, Halifax (Operation Employability Workshop), Project Coordinator.

APPENDIX C

EXCERPT FROM THE INTERIM REPORT - MARCH 1988

Of the information available, 23 employers were originally contacted to participate in Operation Employability (until January 1988). Table 2 summarizes the results of these employer contacts. Twelve employers[6] participated in Operation Employability for the first placement[7] (52.1%) and the other ten employers agreed to consider placements in the fall. Only one employer stated immediately that they would not take placements. Their main reason for not participating involved their belief that they could not provide a suitable placement for this target group.

TABLE 2: SUMMARY OF EMPLOYER CONTACTS (JANUARY 1987 TO JUNE 30, 1987) FOR PLACEMENT 1 (n=23)

	Frequency	%
1. Employers who agreed to participate.	12	52.1
2. Those who did not participate this year but would consider future placements.	10	43.4
3. Employer(s) who did not feel they could participate in the program.	1	4.3
Total	23	99.8

The second placements which began September 1987 until February 1988 involved 16 employers[8]. Four employers belonged to the original group of participating employers[9] (25.0%), and another three employers can be found among the list of ten employers who indicated they would consider future placements (18.8%). Three employers who indicated they would consider future

[6] Some students switched placements in the first year.
[7] January 1987 to June 1987.
[8] Some employers took on more than one student.
[9] It should be noted that some original employers indicated they would prefer to be involved in the spring of 1988.

placements at this time did not participate in the program. Reasons for not participating included: the business itself folded, the business was purchased by someone else and the program could not find a suitable student for the placement. Table 3 summarizes these results.

TABLE 3: CLASSIFICATION OF EMPLOYERS IN PLACEMENT 2 (n=16)

	Frequency	%
1. Original employer participants from Placement 1.	4	25.0
2. Employers who indicated they would consider future placements, but did not participate in Placement 1.	3	18.8
3. New employers	9	56.2
Total	16	100.0

Combining the first two categories in Table 3, one finds that 44% of employers participating in second placements have been secured from contacts previously made by the Project Coordinator. The remaining 56% of employers are new to the program.

Employers who are currently involved in placement three[10] can also be further distinguished. See Table 4 for a summary of these results. Participating employers in third placements include seven of the original employers (38.8%), three employers who participated in the second placements and previously contacted by the Project Coordinator (16.6%) and an additional employer previously approached by the Project Coordinator to participate in the program but could not until now (5.5%).

[10] Placements from February 1988 to June 1988.

TABLE 4: CLASSIFICATION OF EMPLOYERS IN PLACEMENT 3 (n=18)

	Frequency	%
1. Original employer participants in Placement 1.	7	38.8
2. Employers who indicated they would consider future placements, but did not participate in Placement 1.	3	16.6
3. Employers who indicated they would consider future placements, but did not participate in Placement 1 or Placement 2.	1	5.5
4. New employers	7	38.8
Total	18	99.7

Of the 18 employers currently involved in the program, 61.1% can be found among those employers originally contacted by the Project Coordinator in year one (categories 1, 2, 3 - Table 4). The remaining 39.0% of employers are new to the program.

As well as determining the origin of placements in placement two and placement three, it is often useful to examine the retention rate for employer participants. Other communities hoping to implement a program such as "Operation Employability" will be interested in the level of commitment exhibited by employer participants involved in the program. Table 5 traces the involvement of the original employers involved in the first group of placements.

TABLE 5: TRACKING ORIGINAL EMPLOYER PARTICIPANTS FROM PLACEMENT 1 TO PLACEMENT 2 AND PLACEMENT 3 (n=12)

Placement 1	Placement 2	Placement 3
12 (100.0%)	4 (33.3%)	7 (58.3%)
Total	4	7

One finds that some employers have maintained their involvement in the program, and in fact the level of employer participation increased in placement three.

Table 6 follows the involvement of employers who did not originally participate in placement one, but indicated an interest in future placements.

TABLE 6: EMPLOYERS CONSIDERING PLACEMENTS IN PLACEMENT 1 AND THEIR PARTICIPATION IN PLACEMENTS 2 AND 3 (n=10)

Placement 1	Placement 2	Placement 3
10 (100.0%)	3 (40.0%)	4 (40.0%)
Total	3	4

Once again it appears that employers have followed through on their commitments for future placements.

Examining these retention rates reveals that at the present time, Operation Employability has been able to rely heavily on a pool of original employer contacts for student placements. Whether or not these original employers or new employers (contacted for placement 2 and/or placement 3 only) will maintain their level of commitment will have to be examined..

This information, however, should be interpreted with caution. Last year the evaluator found discrepancies and inconsistencies in the completion of employer face sheets. This year the same concerns can be raised. One question that cannot be accurately addressed is how many employers approached did not agree to take placements. The evaluator has only seen one employer face sheet for an employer who did not agree to take placements.

The other item that is not addressed is why new employers involved in the second placements are not involved in third placements. There may be logical reasons for this gap, but this information is not recorded any place.

It is evident that the Project Coordinator had a heavy workload until January, 1988 with the placement and monitoring of students, and the completion of employer face sheets did not receive top priority. Since the job coaches have been hired, they have assumed most of the responsibilities previously held by the Project Coordinator with respect to the placement and monitoring of students. However, job coaches were not informed about the employer face sheets and their responsibility to complete them. Although the evaluator has been assured that the information can be provided, once again we have the potential for the loss of information. Further, a list of employers previously contacted about participation in Operation Employability was not provided to the job coaches. This lack of information could have had the potential to put job coaches in a difficult or awkward situation with an employer.

APPENDIX D

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT COORDINATOR'S ROLE

OPERATION EMPLOYABILITY

WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAM

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR ROLE

The Project Co-ordinator is responsible for working with three Boards of Education in the Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth and the community (business, industry, labour, government and community organizations) to develop a pilot project to help to facilitate the transition of students with various disabilities from school to work, thus improving their employability skills. The amount of time required to successfully manage the project and give it the necessary focus, demands that this person devote his full time and energies to this community development function reporting to an appointed project Steering Committee.

The specific responsibilities are as follows:

1.) To consult with appropriate personnel in the three local Boards to assist them in the development of community work experience programs for students with special educational needs.

2.) To consult with classroom teachers and principals in order to identify a specific number of students with capabilities for work experience training placements as a community demonstration project.

3.) To consult regularly with potential employers in the community in order to identify a variety of appropriate work sites and in turn to match students with job placements.

4.) To consult regularly with superintendents/supervisors of curriculum to encourage individual programs on community life skills and job readiness skills at an earlier age in preparation for work experience.

5.) To be familiar with the content of all special education programs and services provided by the three local Boards and the needs of the workplace so that student skills can be matched and their skills reinforced and developed.

2 . . .

To maintain constant liaison with the employers who participate in the program in order to get feedback and suggestions for improvement in work experience programming.

7.) To develop and maintain a good working liaison with agencies in the community which could provide service to students with special needs for the three years before school leaving time.

8.) To communicate regularly through a community network newsletter to keep all partners in the project updated on program development and progress.

9.) To write regular reports and to complete the necessary paper work involved in insuring that the project is run as smoothly as possible.

10.) To consult regularly with key people who are involved in the development of similar projects and programs in other jurisdications in order to share knowledge.

11.) To be familiar with appropriate federal and provincial legislation, Board of Education policies and insurance regulations regarding work experience programs.

12.) To regularly re-examine the objectives of the project with its community partners and to make adjustments where necessary.

13.) To be able to make helpful suggestions in the area of functional education as a result of constant communication and liaison with employers, community agencies, parents,students, etc.

14.) To liaise with parent advocacy groups, employment agencies, vocational training organizations and other key community groups.

15.) To develop community awareness and advocacy and to act as a community information resource.

16.) To assist in the development of grant proposals to acquire the necessary funding from different levels of government and community organizations.

17.) To report regularly to and consult with the I.E.C. Steering/Advisory Committee as well as to maintain constant liaison with the Executive Director.